

Police board's newest member learns ropes



SYLVIA HUDSON: Replaces controversial Arnold Minors on police board.

BY BRUCE DEMARA
STAFF REPORTER

The newest member of the Metro Police Services Board sat poised and silent during her first meeting, absorbing the intricacies of parking enforcement, division boundaries and budget documents.

"It's my first board meeting and of course, I have to learn the ropes. I'm not saying anything but I'm really observing," said Sylvia Hudson.

Hudson, a former Jamaican police officer who works in the admissions office at Ryerson Polytechnical University, was sworn in yesterday, while her family beamed with pride.

She replaces Arnold Minors, a Rae government appointee who stirred controversy during his three-year term over his views on police relations with minorities, especially the black community.

Hudson, who said she has

never met Minors, said no one should expect a repeat performance.

"I'm not Mr. Minors. I'm new and his philosophy is different from mine," Hudson said.

"I want to look at issues in the black community. I want to bring those issues on to the board and see where I go from there. (But) no, I'm not advocating on behalf of the black community," Hudson said.

"I'm advocating on behalf of

all people in my community. I want to work with everyone. I don't want to have a certain sector of people that I'm representing," Hudson said.

"I have to work with the public in general. I don't have a platform that I'm working at, I don't have an agenda. I just want to work with people and to do my best to make society safe."

Hudson, who holds a social work degree, has worked with

federal prisoners on parole, young offenders and victims of crime, often as a volunteer.

Hudson acknowledged she is "fearful" at times living in Metro, recalling an incident last year when her husband witnessed the house across the street being broken into.

"Basically, I think it's a safe city. I wouldn't call it a crime-infested city. But I think some elements are creeping into our neighborhoods."

Boothby rejects Bernardo criticism

Metro police Chief David Boothby has rejected a major criticism levelled in a scathing report on the Bernardo investigation: that lack of co-operation between police forces prevented the rapist-killer from being caught more quickly.

"I can tell you right now that I can call any major police service in southern Ontario and I've done it for years, both as a chief and I've done it as an